

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS (AS ON AMENDED SHEETS ANNEXED TO IPER)

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-18. (canceled)

19. (new) A biodegradable fibrous support for mulching of the soil for long-term growing periods of up to 36 months, said fibrous support being coated with an aqueous solution comprising biodegradable natural latex, characterized in that the aqueous solution comprises from 5 to 50 % by weight of biodegradable natural latex obtained from rubber tree, the balance to 100% including water, and stabilizing and preservative agents of said latex, the solution forming, on the support, a coating of 10 to 200 g/m² as dry matter of latex, advantageously from 90 to 100 g/m², said preservative agents being chosen from the group comprising animal or vegetable proteins, such as glycerin; or chitosan, or tannins or indigo by themselves or as a mixture.

20. (new) A support according to Claim 19, characterized in that said natural latex is prevulcanized.

21. (new) A support according to Claim 19, characterized in that the natural latex is obtained from *Hevea Brasiliensis* and has a dry rubber concentration of at least of 60 %.

22. (new) A support according to Claim 19, characterized in that the stabilizing agents are chosen from the group comprising the vegetable proteins, such as casein, tannins or indigo or soy protein or glycerin; or the mineral fillers, such as talc or calcium carbonate; by themselves or as a mixture.

23. (new) A support according to Claim 19, characterized in that the coating solution consists, by weight, of:

from 5 to 50 %, biodegradable natural latex obtained from rubber tree,

from 1 to 20 %, proteins,

from 0 to 20 %, talc,

from 1 to 20 % of chitosan, and/or indigo, and/or glycerin, and/or tannins,

the balance to 100 % consisting of water.

24. (new) A support according to Claim 19, characterized in that it contains thermo-bonding fibres representing from 5 to 50 %, advantageously between 10 and 15 %, by weight, of the support.

25. (new) A support according to Claim 24, characterized in that the thermo bonding fibres are exclusively composed of polylactic acid fibres.

26. (new) A support according to Claim 19, characterized in that it is provided with a grid, which is either maintained on the whole or part of at least one face of the support, or incorporated into the whole or part of the mass of the support, said grid being produced of a biodegradable polymers chosen from the group comprising polylactic acid, polycaprolactone, viscose, modified viscose, polyhydroxybutyrate and polyhydroxyalcanoate, by themselves or as a mixture.

27. (new) A support according to Claim 26, characterized in that the grid is made exclusively of modified viscose threads.

28. (new) A support according to Claim 26, characterized in that the weight of the grid is between 10 and 50 g/m², advantageously in the order of 20 g/m².

29. (new) A support according to Claim 26, characterized in that the grid is positioned exclusively in the area of the fixing points of the support on the ground.

30. (new) A support according to Claim 26, characterized in that the grid is glued directly on the surface of the fibrous support by means of a water-resistant biodegradable glue chosen from the group comprising ethylene polyvinyl alcohol

(EVOH) and polyvinyl alcohol (PVA), by themselves or as a mixture, the glue representing between 5 and 50 %, advantageously 15 %, by weight of the grid.

31. (new) A support according to Claim 26, characterized in that the grid is unrolled directly on the fibrous support during its manufacture.

32. (new) A support according to Claim 19, characterized in that it contains a hydrophobic resin representing from 0,5 to 15 % by weight of the support, chosen from the group comprising urea-formaldehyde resins, melamine-formaldehyde resins, polyamide-amine-epichlorhydrin resins, polyethyleneimine resins, starch derivatives, by themselves or as a mixture.

33. (new) A support according to Claim 19, characterized in that it contains carbon black representing from 0,5 to 4 % by weight of the support.

34. (new) A support according to Claim 19, characterized in that the fibre composition of the support is as follows:

from 40 to 100 %, advantageously from 70 to 90 %, by weight of coniferous unbleached or bleached kraft fibres;

from 0 to 60 %, advantageously from 10 to 30 %, by weight of deciduous unbleached or bleached kraft fibres.

35. (new) Support according to Claim 19, characterized in that the fibre composition of the support is as follows:

from 80 to 100 % by weight of annual plant fibres,

from 0 to 20 % by weight of coniferous unbleached or bleached kraft fibres.

36. (new) Support according to Claim 19, characterized in that the fibre composition of the support is as follows:

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from 20 to 100 % by weight of coniferous bleached kraft fibres,

from 0 to 40 % by weight of annual plant fibres,

from 0 to 40 % by weight of rayon fibres.